

City of Corunna
Regular Council Meeting
Monday, February 5, 2001

Present: Billis, Bayless, Dumond, Hornus, Ockerman, Runyan.

Absent: None.

Guests: Lisa Hitchcock, City Manager; Keith Johnson; Don Mehig; Clark Long; Don Runyon; Betty & Fred Bates; Gene & Shirley Sanderson; Dick Sanderson; Jackie Leone, The Argus Press; Judy Horton; Frank Svrcek; Larry LeCureux; Bob Morehouse; Sgt. Kevin Clark, Police Department; Stephanie Wuttke, The Independent; Chief Mark Hetfield, Police Department; Joanne Burgess; John Hoskins; Jerry Ernst, The Flint Journal; Bob Striggow; and other concerned citizens.

The meeting was called to order in the City Council Chambers by Mayor Billis at 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS REGULAR MEETING: Hornus moved, Dumond seconded to approve the minutes of the previous regular meeting.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Ockerman, Dumond, Hornus, Runyan, Bayless.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

AGENDA APPROVAL: Councilperson Ockerman stated he wanted to add discussion concerning the budget to the agenda. He further stated with Ms. Hitchcock's situation, it is something that needs to be addressed. Ms. Hitchcock stated council was given a Board and Commission Information Form from the historical commission. The commission was asking council to consider the appointment. Councilperson Ockerman asked if the appointment was a mayoral appointment. Ms. Hitchcock advised no. Councilperson Ockerman stated the only opposition he had was that the appointment request was brought to the council meeting tonight. Generally, council has time to review the form before council has to make a decision. He further stated he wished the form had been put in his council packet beforehand. He also stated appointing someone as the mayor pro-tem should be addressed. Mayor Billis asked Councilperson Ockerman what budget information he wanted. Councilperson Ockerman advised the numbers that council might need pertaining to the department heads, etc. The city has until April 30 to get a new budget, and council needs to start in that direction. Councilperson Hornus stated the city council usually schedules a number of budget workshops. Councilperson Ockerman stated it sounded like no one wanted to discuss the budget. Councilperson Bayless suggested scheduling the first budget workshop and asked if it was too early to set one.

Mayor Billis suggested waiting to see what happens in regards to Ms. Hitchcock because nothing might be necessary. Hornus moved, Bayless seconded to approve the agenda as

presented with the addition of Item No. 5) Consider Historical Commission Appointment and Item No. 6) Consider Appointment of Mayor Pro-Tem.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Bayless, Runyan, Ockerman, Dumond, Hornus.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

APPROVAL OF VENDOR DISBURSEMENTS: Hornus moved, Dumond seconded to approve the vendor disbursements as presented.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Runyan, Ockerman, Bayless, Hornus, Dumond.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CALL TO AUDIENCE: Joanne Burgess, 527 Converse Street, asked how a woman living alone could use 13,000 gallons of water in one month and have an \$84 water bill. There is no way one person could use that much water in one month. Councilperson Hornus asked if there was anything leaking in her home. Ms. Burgess advised no. Councilperson Ockerman asked if a new meter had been installed. Ms. Burgess advised yes, but she was unable to read it. Councilperson Ockerman stated he had the same problem she had, and when he got the new meter, his bill dropped down to \$46.00. Ms. Burgess stated she came to city hall to pay her bill and was told that someone could check the water meter. Councilperson Hornus asked when the meter was installed. Ms. Burgess advised the meter was installed in late fall. She further advised she has had serious water problems during the last year at her house. There was a broken water line between her sidewalk and the road. Councilperson Hornus asked if the readings were consistent after the new meter was installed. Ms. Burgess advised no, she has had high bills since the meter was replaced. Ms. Hitchcock advised there is a work order procedure and if nothing has been filed, she suggested following the standard format that everyone else follows. Councilperson Runyan asked if the meter was located in the house or by the road. Ms. Burgess advised the meter was put in her basement. Ms. Hitchcock asked if a work order was requested. Ms. Burgess advised no. Ms. Hitchcock advised a work order would be written to check the water meter. Councilperson Ockerman asked if an adjustment could be made. Ms. Hitchcock advised yes, if something is found wrong with the meter. Councilperson Ockerman stated in his case, it was obviously the meter, but he did not receive an adjustment. Ms. Hitchcock advised she was not familiar with his case. Councilperson Ockerman asked if a citizen has to file a complaint and ask for an adjustment. Ms. Hitchcock advised the city has a regular policy and offered to get him a copy of the policy. Councilperson Ockerman suggested informing the public of the policy by putting something in the next newsletter.

Keith Johnson, 211 Hastings Street, stated he asked the Corp of Engineers, when they were checking the dam several years ago, what would happen if the dam went out and was told not as much as a person would think. He further stated he was told there is no easy way to relieve the pressure, and it was not that detrimental for a city to have a dam.

He also stated the city might want to contact the Corp of Engineers to get feedback on what would happen if the dam was removed and what the impact to the environment and

the community would be. Mr. Johnson encouraged council to find out whether repairing the dam is worthwhile before spending any money to repair it. Mayor Billis stated council was setting up a dam review committee and asked Mr. Johnson if he would consider sitting on the committee. Mr. Johnson advised yes.

Don Runyon, 563 Cary Street, asked why the city could not turn the money back in for the half policeman then take the department of public work's half person and put her in Gary Palmer's job so she would have a full-time job. Mayor Billis stated she would not have the qualifications. Mr. Runyon stated she could go to school for 30 days. Mayor Billis stated it might take a little longer than that. Mr. Runyon suggested hitting the dam in the center and letting it fall.

Sam Burwell, 314 W. Mack Street, stated he also came to the meeting because of the dam issue. He has a friend who has been involved in a similar situation in Saginaw County, which has been debated for several years and there are two sides to each story. He further stated it is a very difficult thing to happen, and it was his understanding that council has not come to a resolution yet. Mayor Billis asked if the dam Mr. Burwell was talking about was similar to the city's dam. Mr. Burwell advised yes, it was built to control farmland flooding. He further advised he does not remember anyone having a problem with water coming into their homes or garages, but there were a ton of mosquitoes in the spring. He also advised he would also like to volunteer to be on the dam review committee.

DISCUSSION REGARDING TENT REVIVAL: Mr. Hoskins advised the previous tent revivals went really good. He stated he wanted to get an early start on the tent revival this year by getting everything approved ahead of time. He further stated the tent revival would be held in the same location as last year. The tent usually goes up on Saturday morning and comes down on Saturday morning. He also stated the tent revival would be held Labor Day week. Mr. Hoskins advised he would give the city \$200.00 for electricity. Mayor Billis asked if the city ran into any problems last year. Ms. Hitchcock advised not that she was aware of. Councilperson Runyan asked what dates the revival would be held. Mr. Hoskins advised September 1 through September 8, 2001. Councilperson Ockerman asked Mr. Hoskins if he had any problems with closing the revival by 10:00 p.m. Mr. Hoskins advised no, 10:00 p.m. worked out pretty good. The police department circulated the park at night. Councilperson Ockerman stated he was not real interested in how everything worked out for Mr. Hoskins. He was more interested in how it affected the residents. Councilperson Ockerman asked if the amount Mr. Hoskins paid last year

was enough to cover the electrical. Ms. Hitchcock advised yes. Dumond moved, Hornus seconded to approve the use of McCurdy Park for a tent revival to be held September 1 through September 8, 2001 with the same situation and regulations as in prior years.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Hornus, Dumond, Bayless, Ockerman, Runyan.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER COUNCIL SEAT APPOINTMENT: Councilperson Ockerman stated there were two applicants who met the deadline, and he was tickled to see that two people were interested. He hopes the person who is not appointed understands that he can run in the fall. He further stated he did not see anything wrong with either person, but his preference would be Gene Sanderson because he ran in the last election and only lost by one vote. Since then, Mr. Sanderson has served on the planning commission, has been involved with the parks and recreation, and has been to virtually every council meeting. He also stated he had no problem with the other gentleman. Councilperson Hornus stated Mr. Mehig has been involved with the city for a good many years, which shows he is a dedicated person. Councilperson Runyan stated council received applications from two fine, upstanding gentlemen, but council should take into consideration that one took out a petition, ran for council and only lost by one vote. Councilperson Dumond stated he has been a close friend of Don Mehig for close to 40 years. He further stated Mr. Mehig has been on different commissions throughout the years. Councilperson Bayless stated he had no comment. There were two qualified candidates, and he has no personal input for either person. He further stated he would make his decision on what he had before him. Mayor Billis asked each candidate to address the council. Don Mehig advised he helped to organize and served on the ambulance board for five years. He has been a planning commission member for 23 years, and on the board of review for one year. He further advised he has 30 years of management experience. Gene Sanderson stated he ran for council so he could help the people of Corunna. He further stated new people, who have new ideas, would do a lot for the city, and he would like a chance to prove his point. He also stated Mr. Mehig is a good man who he has known since high school. Mayor Billis asked Mr. Sanderson if he would be willing to give up his appointment since Mr. Mehig is such a good man. Mr. Sanderson stated he did not say what kind of man he was. Mayor Billis asked Councilperson Bayless if he had any comments. Councilperson Bayless stated it appeared that everyone thought he was the swing vote because he has not said anything. He further stated he did not know either candidate very well. He also stated most people who know him know that he leans towards education and management experience, and there is a difference in education that would sway him towards one direction. Mayor Billis stated council had a very tough decision to make since each candidate has been involved in the community. People who volunteer is something that he holds dearly. He further stated he was not sure if council would make a decision or if there would be a split decision, but he is the mayor and was leaning towards Mr.

Sanderson because of the time he has put into wanting to be a councilperson. He also stated Mr. Mehig has also put an effort in serving the community. Mayor Billis advised he would make his decision after council makes their decision. Runyan moved, Ockerman seconded to appoint Gene Sanderson to fill the vacant Ward 2 council seat. Roll call vote:

Yes: Runyan, Ockerman
No: Bayless, Dumond, Hornus.
Motion DENIED

Dumond moved, Hornus seconded to appoint Don Mehig as the council representative for Ward 2.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Dumond, Hornus, Bayless.
No: Ockerman, Runyan.
Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER DAM REVIEW COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS: Bayless moved, Hornus seconded to form a Dam Review Committee consisting of one councilperson, the city manager, the superintendent of public works, the chief of police, one planning commission member, and three residents-at-large. Mayor Billis asked Councilperson Runyan if he would be willing to serve on the committee since he is a councilperson and planning commission member. Councilperson Runyan advised yes. Councilperson Bayless stated he believed both seats were needed because there is an election in the fall and there could be changes, but the committee would have to go on. Ms. Hitchcock stated the committee would only be an advisory committee and would only bring recommendations to the council. Councilperson Hornus asked Sam Burwell if he would be willing to sit on the committee. Mr. Burwell advised yes. Mayor Billis advised council that they should keep in mind there is a possibility that he might veto the council appointment. Councilperson Bayless advised his motion was to form a committee. The makeup of the committee has not been decided other than the ones that are defined such as the city manager, the superintendent of public works, and the chief of police. Councilperson Ockerman stated he did not understand why the chief of police had to be on the committee. Ms. Hitchcock advised for safety. If the dam goes out, people need to be notified. Councilperson Ockerman stated that would be normal police duties. Ms. Hitchcock stated it would be a council decision. Councilperson Bayless stated the committee would be asked to come up with an emergency action plan, which is required by the state. The chief of police's input would be invaluable.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Ockerman, Dumond, Hornus, Runyan, Bayless.
No: None.

Motion CARRIED

Councilperson Bayless stated the three residents, who have shown an interest in being on the committee, should turn in a form, which is standard procedure. Council should follow the procedure it has in place. Ms. Hitchcock stated a letter and board form would be sent to the planning commission to see if anyone is interested in being the planning commission representative. She further stated she would also send a board form to the three residents who have shown an interest.

CONSIDER EXTENSION OF AUDIT CONTRACT: Dumond moved, Hornus seconded to

approve the audit contract extension with Abraham & Gaffney, P.C. through June 30, 2001 in the amount of \$8,900.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Bayless, Runyan, Ockerman, Dumond, Hornus.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER HISTORICAL COMMISSION APPOINTMENT: Hornus moved, Bayless seconded to appoint Barbara Parks to the Historical Commission, term to expire December 31, 2002. Councilperson Bayless stated he has worked with Ms. Parks on the Parks and Recreation Commission and has found her to be very sincere and dedicated, and was recommending that council approve her appointment. Mayor Billis stated there have been many council discussions about having things dropped in council's lap at the last minute. He told council if they approved the appointment that was fine, but he was telling them point blank that he would veto the appointment based on that reason.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Ockerman, Bayless, Hornus, Dumond.

No: Runyan.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR PRO-TEM: Mayor Billis advised that Councilperson Dumond had the most seniority on the council. Councilperson Runyan advised the city charter does not list any qualifications for the mayor pro-tem so seniority would not really apply. Councilperson Hornus stated he believed it was up to the mayor to select the mayor pro-tem. Ms. Hitchcock advised no, it was a council decision. Hornus moved, Bayless seconded to appoint David Dumond as Mayor Pro-Tem.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Hornus, Dumond, Bayless.

No: Ockerman, Runyan.

Motion CARRIED

CALL TO AUDIENCE: Gene Sanderson asked council to withdraw his name as a candidate because he did not want to embarrass Mr. Mehig. Mr. Sanderson stated the only thing he could do is to get out and talk to people to see what they have to say, run in the November election and then maybe the clique will be broken.

Judy Horton advised the mayor has stated that he intends to veto the historical commission appointment. She further advised she wanted to explain why the appointment was needed. The historical commission has to have a treasurer. Mayor Billis interrupted

Ms. Horton and told her that everything she was about to say he already knew. He stated the veto has nothing to do with her. He also stated what Ms. Horton had to say would not change his mind, but he would talk to Ms. Horton before he made his decision.

Dick Sanderson stated he thinks there is a clique in the council and that is all he had to say.

ADJOURN: Hornus moved to adjourn.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Bayless, Runyan, Dumond, Hornus, Ockerman.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED Time was 8:11 p.m.

DR. JAMES BILLIS, MAYOR

YVONNE F. LONG, CITY CLERK